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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LISBON 001989

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TAGS: [YI](#) [BO](#) [LE](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PO](#)  
SUBJECT: PORUTUGUESE VIEWS ON THE SEPTEMBER 15 GAERC

REF: SECSTATE 151189

Classified By: Dana M. Brown, Pol/Econ Officer, State Department  
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) P/E officer paid a call on MFA Deputy European Correspondent, Ana Filomena Rocha on September 14, to discuss the policy areas listed in reftel before the September 15 GAERC. Rocha stressed that the EU's policy response to the situation in Sudan would be given the most consideration during the meeting. Nevertheless she commented on the other reftel policy areas and offered insight into the current EU interaction with Iran:

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Balkans  
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12. (SBU) Kosovo: Discussion on Kosovo will be brief in view of the successful election last Sunday. The EU plans to begin negotiation with civil society institutions soon. Rocha commented that it is a shame to see the growing disparity between Kosovo and Serbia. She added that total independence for Kosovo would be a significant mistake. "How far will you push Serbia before you have a situation like with Germany before WWII?" she asked.

-- (SBU) Serbia: The EU's meeting with the Serbs on September 29 is unlikely to reinvigorate the process especially since the GOS has limited options in dealing with Mladic, according to Rocha. She said the GAERC would discuss strategies to engage through scholarly exchanges and public diplomacy efforts but Rocha remarked that it seemed that the process had stalled.

-- (C) Bosnia: The GAERC will press Bosnia to tone down its rhetoric especially with regards to the Srsпка region. Rocha stressed that the current rumblings are especially troubling to Portugal in light of the GOP's recent discussion about redeploying troops serving in Bosnia to other areas (including Lebanon) by the end of the year. The GOP will monitor the situation very closely and might reconsider its plans if the situation deteriorates further.

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Africa  
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13. (C) Sudan and Darfur: Rocha said the GAERC would focus carefully on Sudan during this month's meeting to find constructive ways to respond to the increasing violence. In particular, EU members will be watching whether the African Union (AU) decides to extend its mission during its September 18 meeting. Currently, EU member states want to display public support for an extension to the AU mission, according to Rocha, in order to avoid future blame from the AU for a deteriorating situation. Rocha underscored that it is critical to avoid creating a vacuum in which neither the AU

nor the UN have a mission in country. The EU Secretariat plans to request that European representatives demarche Moscow, Tripoli, and in Arab League nations to attempt to win support for a UN mandate and urge that all military attacks stop immediately. Rocha suggested that the EU was likely to attempt to approach select nations while in New York for UNGA.

-- (C) Democratic Republic of Congo: Javier Solana will brief the group on his September 12 and 13 visit. Rocha commented that she also saw the situation deteriorating fast in the Democratic Republic of Congo and indicated that their decision to postpone elections is a bad omen.

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Middle East  
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14. (C) Middle East: Rocha noted that the informal Gymnich meeting was a useful discussion but had been overcome by events since the situation had changed significantly over the last two weeks. Rather than discuss the crisis in "big picture" terms, Rocha anticipated that the GAERC would focus on practical mission and specific policy concerns.

-- (C) Israeli-Palestinian Issues: Rocha commented that the EU will need to decide as a group whether to compromise on issues with the Palestinian government. For example, would the EU be willing to accept two of the three principles as "good enough" from the Palestinians? Rocha said she suspected it would be a tough discussion since it will be the first time member states discuss the EU's policy limits.

-- (U) Lebanon: UNIFIL contributions, reconstruction efforts, and coordination plans will be the primary agenda items,

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according to Rocha.

-- (C) Iran: Solana will brief the attendees on his meetings with the Iranians this week. Rocha noted that the Iranians had met with some EU members but not with Portugal. She raised the possibility that the Iranians were attempting to divide and conquer the Europeans with such visits. Rocha further reported that Portugal considers Iran a threat but would be more interested in UN sanctions than in pursuing bilateral sanctions.

-- (C) Iraq: The GAERC plans to discuss Iraq very briefly and recap the Abu Dhabi meeting outcomes. Rocha said Portugal will need further details on the International Compact for Iraq before deciding whether to support it.  
O'Neal